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PATENT
ATTORNEY DOCKET NO. 54320.000011

THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Application Number : 09/982,531 Confirmation No.: 8179
Applicant : Astrid VRANG et al.
Filed : October 19, 2001
Title : IMPROVED FERMENTATION METHOD FOR PRODUCTION
OF HETEROLOGOUS GENE PRODUCTS IN LACTIC ACID
BACTERIA
TC/Art Unit : 1636
Examiner: : To Be Assigned

Docket No. : 54320.000011
Customer No. : 21967

STATUS INQUIRY

Commissioner for Patents
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

Sir:

The above-identified patent application was filed on October 19, 2001. On January 14, 2002, Applicants responded to the Notice to File Missing Parts of Application, and included an executed Declaration for Patent Application. Thus, it appears that all formal requirements with regard to the patent application have been satisfied. Nonetheless, Applicants have not received any communication regarding substantive examination of this application. Applicants respectfully request an indication of when they might expect the issuance of such a communication.

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If Applicants or their representative may be of any assistance to the Patent Office in connection with this matter, the undersigned counsel would welcome a telephone call or other communication from the Patent Office.

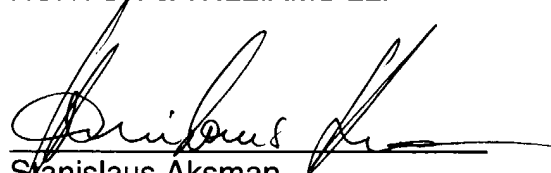
It is believed that no fee is due in connection with this filing. However, in the event that any fees are necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge our Deposit Account No. 50-0206.

Respectfully submitted,

HUNTON & WILLIAMS LLP

Date: March 2, 2004

By:


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